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'NUGE' FLASH

TEAM CANADA'S RYAN NUGENT-HOPKINS OFFERS SOME SAGE ADVICE TO HIS TEAMMATES AT THE WORLD JUNIOR TOURNEY IN RUSSIA PAGE 14

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Minister to 'bring down the hammer' on teachers: Source

Labour strife. Province expected to impose similar contracts to those of French, Catholic teachers

Education Minister Laurel Broten will impose contracts on public-school teachers under Bill 115 before classes resume on Monday, a senior government source said on Wednesday.

The details — to be announced on Thursday — mirror the two-year deals reached with Catholic and French-language teachers, freezing pay for most, reducing sick days and limiting how much unclaimed sick time can be cashed out at retirement.

"We have to do it or else it'll be the world's biggest flip-flop," the government source said.

But it's unlikely the measure will restore peace in public schools. Many teachers are expected to continue boycotting extracurricular activities, and their unions have threatened a one-day, province-wide protest.

Education Minister Laurel Broten will impose contracts under Bill 115, a source says. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation say Bill 115, passed with support from the Progressive Conservatives, curbs their charter right to collective bargaining and are challenging it in court.

Premier Dalton McGuinty strongly hinted at the government's action in an open letter to teachers on Wednesday.

"Ontarians expect, rightly, that uncertainty in education will not continue indefinitely," he said. "Our preference is and has always been negotiated settlements. But after 10 months, the bargaining deadline (Jan. 1) has passed."

While there had been pressure from union leaders such as Sam Hammond of the elementary teachers' union and some Liberal leadership candidates to delay imposing the terms of Bill 115, that option was rejected.

"I don't know anyone but Sam Hammond, Gerard Kennedy and Eric Hoskins who thinks postponing it will reduce the uncertainty," the senior source added.

A senior Liberal strategist said Broten has no choice but to use the powers under Bill 115. "She is going to bring down the hammer. You've got a whole bunch of staffers and teachers in other parts of the (education) system who have agreed to the terms … you have to bring everyone into the same deal," the strategist said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Thames Valley teachers picket outside Princess Elizabeth Public School (247 Thompson Rd.) during a Dec. 20 strike that cancelled elementary school classes for the day. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO FILE

Call for action

Freeze salaries: Hudak

Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak, who has called for across-the-board pay freezes, said Wednesday that the solution is to impose contracts immediately under Bill 115. Otherwise, parents and students will be in the dark when classes resume on Monday.

Tim Hudak TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

"Who is running the education system? Is it the government that is running it, as it should be, or is it the teachers' union?" Hudak said. "We owe it our kids and parents to fix that problem. Contracts should be imposed. It has taken far too long. Why else would you pass a bill if you are not going to use it?"

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario declined to comment on the new developments in the labour dispute. A spokesperson said president Sam Hammond will comment on Thursday after hearing the education minister's statement. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Going from idea to reality

IDEA Centre. Western grad, London native on the hunt for right spot to enhance city's technological edge

ANGELA MULLINS
angela.mullins@metronews.ca

Wanted: A building that's inspirational, conveniently located but slightly off the beaten path, and big enough to include meeting rooms, an auditorium, lounges, a workshop, and then some.

William Komer knows exactly what he wants in the bricks and mortar for his London IDEA Centre. Problem is, he can't find the right spot to launch what could spark a wave of technology-based businesses.

"London seems really adverse to new technology. We're trying hard to change that," said Komer, 24, a recent Western University graduate who owns a web-design firm. "We want to be the catalyst that makes things happen faster in the city."

After an extensive search of available buildings, Komer and his partners thought they'd found the right match at Wortley Village's former Normal School (165 Elmwood Ave. E.). But, they didn't know the city had a deadline for redevelopment proposals on the property and missed the boat for getting involved.

Now, Komer's looking for something else that might work — and keeping an eye out for a chance to get his foot in the Normal School's door.

City council has vowed to work with Komer in his search, and he's developing a three-dimensional model — based on the Normal School's layout — to show London planners exactly what he needs to make his project tick.

So far, their suggestions for possible sites, including rehabbing space on the psychiatric hospital lands near Highbury Avenue and Oxford Street, have fallen flat, Komer said.

What hasn't fallen flat, Komer said, is his idea — a non-profit centre that matches people who have ideas for tech-centred businesses with talent and investors ready to turn concepts into reality.

In the end, he said, the centre could create jobs and help keep young college graduates in the city.

"We have all the talent you need here in London," Komer said. "(There's) just a disconnect between the talent and (people starting a) company."

Follow Angela Mullins on Twitter @MetroAngela

The idea

- The London IDEA Centre would be a mix of a business incubator, a business accelerator and a creative space for developing tech-based ideas.
- The model hinges on matching people who have ideas with people who have the skills to turn them into commercial ventures.
- The right spot for launching the effort needs to have a creative vibe and close connection to the community, leaders say.

William Komer, 24, of London, is pictured Wednesday with a three-dimensional rendering of what he considers the ideal site for a proposed London IDEA Centre. The non-profit centre would help launch technology-based companies by turning ideas into reality. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

Police. London's violent crime stats hold steady

It's not great news, but it's not all bad either.

The latest statistics on violent crime from the London police show the number of incidents are holding steady.

Figures show between November of 2011 and 2012, the number of crimes like murder and assault are at roughly the same levels.

Homicides held steady at six while attempted murders increased from two to nine.

Sexual assaults increased three per cent, up six to 219 in 2012 from 213 in 2011. Domestic charges were down by 120.

London police Const. Ken Steeves said while these figures aren't perfect, they aren't completely dissatisfied with them.

Quoted

"Comparing the two years, we're happy there hasn't been a spike in any of the areas that are too concerning."
Const. Ken Steeves

"Obviously we'd like to see a reduction in all (crime) levels, especially homicides being the ultimate, we'd like to see zero," Steeves says.

As for how these statistics can help officers out on the streets, Steeves says they can assist with crime prevention efforts and community outreach programs. AM980/AM980.CA

Public reception

Mayor's levee on Sunday

Mayor Joe Fontana will host his second annual New Year's levee on Sunday.

The event will be held from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Aeolian Hall (795 Dundas St.). Everyone is welcome, and there will be light refreshments as well as a cash bar.

Joe Fontana
CONTRIBUTED

There will be a collection of non-perishable food donations for the London Food Bank.

Before the public reception, the mayor will host a private event with the winners of the 2013 Mayor's Honouree Awards. METRO

St. Thomas

911 pocket dialers, pranksters cost $20K: Police

St. Thomas police are sounding the alarm over prank and pocket-dial 911 calls.

Officers say they responded to 1,500 bogus calls in 2012, with two officers attending each. The calls racked up a total of 500 wasted police hours at a hefty cost of $20,055.

Police say the problem would be easily fixed if people took a few precautions like locking their phone's screen or removing the battery of any old or unused devices that may still have emergency capabilities.

AM980/AM980.CA

Inpatient unit

New flu alert at University Hospital

An alert level 2 outbreak has been called for influenza A on an inpatient unit in University Hospital.

The outbreak occurred on the northeast corridor of the clinical neurological sciences wing, hospital officials said Wednesday.

An alert level 2 can be declared when there have been two laboratory confirmed cases of hospital-acquired flu on a specific unit.

University Hospital cleared a level 2 flu outbreak on the inpatient medicine unit earlier this week. METRO

Chris Christie speaks at a news conference at New Jersey's State House on Wednesday in Trenton, N.J. Christie blasted fellow Republican John Boehner for the House Speaker's decision Tuesday to delay a vote on Superstorm Sandy relief and says the inaction is "inexcusable." NEW JERSEY GOVERNOR'S OFFICE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Congress to vote Friday on Superstorm Sandy aid

Rebuilding stage. Money from House votes could result in a roughly $60-billion relief package

The leader of the U.S. House agreed Wednesday to a vote this week on aid for Superstorm Sandy recovery, changing course after coming under intense pressure from angry fellow Republicans.

House Speaker John Boehner will schedule a vote Friday for $9 billion for the national flood insurance program and another on Jan. 15 for a remaining $51 billion in the package, Republican Rep. Peter King of New York said after emerging from a meeting with Boehner and Republican lawmakers from New York and New Jersey. The votes will be taken by the new Congress that will be sworn in Thursday.

Boehner's decision Tuesday night to cancel an expected vote on the storm aid before Congress ends its current session had provoked a firestorm of criticism from New York, New Jersey and adjacent states, including many lawmakers in his own party.

According to King, Boehner explained that after the contentious vote this week to avoid major tax increases and spending cuts called the "fiscal cliff," Boehner didn't think it was the right time to schedule the vote before the current Congress went out of business.

King left the session with Boehner without the anger that led him to lash out at the speaker Tuesday night.

"What's done is done. The end result will be New York, New Jersey and Connecticut will receive the funding they deserve. We made our position clear last night. That's in the past," King said.

Sandy was blamed for at least 120 deaths and battered coastline areas from North Carolina to Maine in October. New York, New Jersey and Connecticut were the hardest hit states and suffered high winds, flooding and storm surges.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the table

The House Appropriations Committee has drafted a smaller, $27-billion measure for immediate recovery needs and a second amendment for $33 billion to meet longer-term needs.

- The $9 billion in flood insurance money to be voted was originally in the $27-billion measure.
- The votes on Jan. 15 will be for $18 billion in immediate assistance and $33 billion for longer-term projects, including protection against future storms.

Mishandling debt could be 'catastrophic': Obama

U.S. stocks surged as traders around the globe felt renewed confidence over global markets after Congress reached a deal to avert the fiscal cliff. SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

A last-minute deal in Congress to avoid the economy-shaking "fiscal cliff" sent world stocks climbing Wednesday, but doesn't solve the problem of the massive U.S. deficit, meaning other battles on deep spending cuts and the federal debt limit loom in the coming weeks and months.

All the major U.S. stock indexes jumped by at least 2 per cent, and the Dow Jones industrial average saw its biggest surge in six months.

A smiling President Barack Obama said he would sign the law "that raises taxes on the wealthiest two per cent of Americans while preventing tax hikes that could have sent the economy back into recession." Then he left for Hawaii to resume his holiday break.

Congress also will have to act as early as February on raising the $16.4-trillion federal borrowing limit, which will allow the country to pay its bills. The U.S. officially hit that debt limit Monday. "If Congress refuses to give the United States government the ability to pay these bills on time, the consequences for the entire global economy would be catastrophic — far worse than the impact of a fiscal cliff," Obama said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Northern perspective

"Canada welcomes the agreement reached between the president and the Congress. ... That said, there remain ... significant risks to the U.S. economic outlook." Canadian Finance Minister Jim Flaherty

Court battle. Sperm donor on the hook for child support payments

A sperm donor in the U.S. is fighting an effort to force him to pay child support for a child conceived through artificial insemination by a lesbian couple.

When 46-year-old William Marotta donated sperm to Angela Bauer and Jennifer Schreiner in 2009, Marotta relinquished all parental rights, including financial responsibility to the child. When Bauer and Schreiner filed for state assistance in Kansas this year, the state demanded the donor's name so it could collect child support for the now 3-year-old girl.

William Marotta is being asked to pay child support after providing sperm to a same-sex couple. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The state contends the agreement between Marotta and the women is not valid because Kansas law requires a licensed physician to perform artificial insemination.

"If a sperm donor makes his contribution through a licensed physician and a child is conceived, the donor is held harmless under state statute. In cases where the parties do not go through a physician or a clinic, there remains the question of who actually is the father of a child or children," Angela de Rocha, a spokeswoman for the Kansas Department for Children and Families, said in a statement.

Bauer and Schreiner have said they fully support Marotta's efforts to fight the state's request. When Bauer was diagnosed in March with what she calls "a significant illness" that prevents her from working, Schreiner sought health insurance for their daughter from the state. The DCF told Schreiner if she didn't provide the sperm donor's name, it would deny any health benefits because she was withholding information.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Movie theatre shooting. Families of victims reject invitation to reopening

Relatives of the majority of people killed in a Colorado movie theatre rejected an invitation on Wednesday to attend its reopening this month, calling it a "disgusting offer" that came at a terrible time — right after the first Christmas without their loved ones.

The parents, grandparents, cousins and widow of nine of the 12 people killed said they were asked to attend an "evening of remembrance" followed by a movie when the Aurora theatre reopens on Jan. 17. They released a letter sent to the theatre's owner, Cinemark, in which they criticized the Texas-based company for not previously reaching out to them to offer condolences and refusing to meet with them without lawyers.

"Our family members will never be on this earth with us again and a movie ticket and some token words from people who didn't care enough to reach out to us ... is appalling," the letter said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fatal crash

Paparazzo killed trying to snap Bieber photo

A paparazzo was struck and killed by a car while darting across a street after taking pictures of Justin Bieber's Ferrari when it was pulled over along a freeway in Los Angeles, police said Wednesday.

Bieber was not in the car at the time. The singer later said his prayers were with the family of the 29-year-old photographer.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New Year's Day

3 teens dead after alleged plane joyride

Authorities believe that a trio of U.S. teenagers took a small airplane on a joyride without permission before it crashed, killing them all. The plane crashed Tuesday night in Alabama.

"I think they were just looking for a thrill, and they had their last one," Walker County sheriff's Chief Deputy James Painter said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Newtown kids will return to class in new 'Sandy Hook'

Shooting survivors. School in neighbouring town has been renamed, renovated and garrisoned by a team of police officers

The children who escaped last month's shootings at a Connecticut elementary school will be returning to classes in a neighbouring town in a refurbished school now named after their old one, school officials said Wednesday.

Newtown Superintendent of Schools Janet Robinson announced that the students' new school, the former Chalk Hill Middle School in Monroe, has been renamed Sandy Hook Elementary School. She said the Sandy Hook staff made that decision.

"That's who they are. They're the Sandy Hook family," Robinson said after a news conference at a park in Monroe a few kilometres from the school, which will open for classes Thursday morning. An open house was held for parents and students on Wednesday.

The school where the shootings occurred remains closed and guarded by police. Newtown officials haven't decided yet on the building's future.

It's been nearly three weeks since the Dec. 14 massacre, when gunman Adam Lanza killed 20 students and six educators.

Numerous police officers on Wednesday guarded the outside of the Monroe school, which is about 11 kilometres from the old school.

Teams of workers, many of them volunteers, prepared the Chalk Hill school with fresh paint and new furniture and even raised bathroom floors so the smaller elementary school students can reach the toilets. The students' desks, backpacks and other belongings that were left behind following the shooting were taken to the new school to make them feel at home.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On guard

"I think right now it has to be the safest school in America."

Monroe police Lt. Keith White on the level of security at the new school.

Counsellors say it's important for children to get back to a normal routine and for teachers and parents to offer reassurances. JESSICA HILL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syrian death toll at 60,000: UN

The scene on Dec. 17 after a mortar shell hit a street, killing several people in Aleppo, Syria. NARCISO CONTRERAS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

The United Nations estimated Wednesday that more than 60,000 people have been killed in Syria's 21-month-old uprising against authoritarian rule, a toll one-third higher than what anti-regime activists had counted. The UN human rights chief called the toll "truly shocking."

Opposition activist groups had been estimating the death toll at more than 45,000 and this was the first time that the UN estimate was higher.

"Given there has been no let up in the conflict since the end of November, we can assume that more than 60,000 people have been killed by the beginning of 2013," UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said in a statement. "The number of casualties is much higher than we expected and is truly shocking," she added.

"The failure of the international community, in particular the Security Council, to take concrete actions to stop the blood-letting, shames us all," Pillay said. "Collectively, we have fidd at the edges while Syria burns."

The real death toll is likely to be even greater because reports containing incomplete information were excluded and a significant number of killings may not have been documented at all by the sources available.

"There are many names not on the list for people who were quietly shot in the woods," Pillay's spokesman Rupert Colville told The Associated Press.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deadly conflagration

A regime airstrike on a gas station in a Damascus suburb on Wednesday pushed the death toll even higher.

- Anti-government activists said dozens were killed when the strike ignited an inferno and left behind a gruesome trail of charred bodies.
- It may be the bloodiest attack in weeks.

Lost. Woman missing for months allegedly killed in Pakistan over finances

A lawyer says a Canadian-Indian woman missing since August has been killed in eastern Pakistan.

The woman, Rajvinder Gill, went to Pakistan to try to settle a financial dispute but disappeared.

Her father went to the police after she didn't contact her family for weeks.

The lawyer, Aftab Bajwa, who represents the woman's father, said the police chief of the eastern city of Lahore told a court Wednesday that a suspect confessed to killing the woman.

A police officer said the suspect confessed to working with a German of Pakistani origin who was involved in the dispute, and together they killed the woman.

The suspect said the second man has fled the country.

Police have not yet managed to locate the woman.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Banned weapons

Canada opens gun trade to Colombia

Just one day before last month's school massacre in Newtown, Conn., Canada offered its gun merchants "new market opportunities" to export banned assault weapons to Colombia, one of the world's most violent countries.

Canada quietly eased its ban on the export of assault-style weapons to Colombia after Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird recommended an order amending the Automatic Firearms Country Control List.

Despite its impressive economic growth, Colombia is host to serious human rights violations, a 50-year guerilla insurgency and world-leading cocaine production.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A flag-carrying Idle No More protester watches as police divert traffic around a blockade set up in Winnipeg on Wednesday. The demonstration lasted three hours and forced traffic on the Trans-Canada Highway to be rerouted around the Perimeter Highway. SHANE GIBSON/METRO IN WINNIPEG

What is the point of Idle No More?

Restless natives.
Organizers say national movement is about protecting all Canadians, not just First Nations

BERNICE PONTANILLA
Metro in Winnipeg

While the Idle No More protests gain steam around the world, many Canadians still don't know what it's all about.

Dave Sauer, president of the Winnipeg Labour Council, said the issues being raised by the Idle No More protests, specifically the federal government's Bill C-45, affect Canadians of all backgrounds — and should therefore interest them.

"As a trade unionist, we live and die by our … agreements," Sauer said. "The treaties that we've made with the First Nations of this country … right now it's pretty obvious that those are not being followed through on, one end is not honouring the agreement."

Sauer said many of the non-aboriginal people at the Idle No More events share the concern that the Canadian government, led by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, isn't talking with Canadians and is changing the country through large omnibus bills that don't get enough debate before being passed into law.

"That's a bridge that's starting to be built between First Nations and non-First Nations activism," Sauer said, adding the Canadian Labour Congress has endorsed Idle No More.

"If you look at the changes to the Navigable Waters Act, we have a lot of river systems now, especially in Manitoba, that are no longer protected, that I know a lot of non-First Nations people use, whether it's for transportation or recreation."

Wab Kinew, director of indigenous inclusion at the University of Winnipeg, wrote an article for the Huffington Post on the Idle No More movement when it started gathering steam in December.

"When aboriginal people do well, all of Canada does well," Kinew said, adding he hopes Idle No More also becomes an awakening for young people of all backgrounds and political stripes to get educated on and engaged with "the policies and the programs that are going to determine their futures."

What they want

The organizers of Idle No More mostly want meaningful dialogue between politicians and First Nations.

- They say things like the Conservative Government removing key environmental protection of the vast majority of waterways in Canada is a violation of their treaty rights and want them reversed.
- Organizers also hope the Idle No More protests will spur Canadians to become more educated about treaty rights and galvanize youth of all races to action.

Canadian newborns — you could have it better in eight other nations

Canada pulls in at No. 9 in The Economist's ranking of the best places to be born in 2013.

It's a slight slip from the fifth place Canada held in the magazine's slightly more whimsical 1988 list.

A quarter-century ago, The Economist gave Canada maximum bonus points for scenery and "having the most desirable passport," as well as good marks for lack of cultural poverty. Canada got a predictably low score on the yawn index in 1988.

This time, the magazine said, its scores have turned "deadly serious." Rankings are calculated through a mix of wealth, crime rate, trust in public institutions and the health of family life.

Quality of family life is based primarily on divorce rates, said Laza Kekic of the Economist Intelligence Unit. Job security is calculated by unemployment rates and gender equality by the number of seats in parliament held by women.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

First and the worst

Switzerland topped the list, while Nigeria was last (80th).

Owner of lost lobsters and gifts tracked down

Stacey Nash's Christmas vacation involved missing lobsters, the police and one thoughtful bus driver.

"This will be a story we'll never forget," Nash said.

On Wednesday morning, Halifax Regional Police issued a release asking for the public's help in finding the owner of a suitcase filled with frozen lobsters and Christmas gifts.

A Metro Transit driver had turned it into police before noon after spotting it on Monday.

"Given the nature of the items, whoever owned it was not local," police spokesman Const. Pierre Bourdages said. "It paid off to alert the public."

Thanks to a tip from someone who read the release and saw a Kijiji ad by Nash's sister-in-law about the missing suitcase, police called her in Toronto less than an hour later.

Nash said she was "just so happy" everything was safe.

"I never eat seafood here in Toronto," said Nash, who is originally from Shelburne, N.S. "It's just not the same."

The suitcase was lost at about 6 a.m. on Monday when Nash's brother drove her to the airport to catch a flight back to Ontario, after her first holiday visit to Halifax in 20 years.

"He said, 'Stacey, you're going to have to do without your lobster,'" Nash said when he saw the back of the truck was open.

When she realized the luggage was gone — along with a Wii, clothing and Christmas gifts besides the three large lobsters — Nash said she was upset but had to board the plane.

Stacey's sister-in-law, Krista Nash, picked up the suitcase on Wednesday afternoon from police and is making plans with Nash on how to ship the luggage to Toronto.

HALEY RYAN/METRO IN HALIFAX

Krista Nash holds a suitcase and a bag full of frozen seafood after retrieving her sister-in-law Stacey's lost luggage from the Halifax Regional Police station on Wednesday afternoon. DEVAAN INGRAHAM/FOR METRO IN HALIFAX

New Year's Eve babies

Twins give birth to sons 2 hours apart

Aiden Lee Alan Dilts and Donavyn Scott Bratten didn't wait until New Year's Day to come screaming into the world, but the circumstances of their births are still pretty special: The babies were born about two hours apart to Ohio mothers who are identical twins.

The Akron Beacon Journal reports that 19-year-old mothers Aimee and Ashlee Nelson both gave birth on Monday even though their due dates were about a week apart.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Calgary

Hundreds affected by fuel mix-up

Hundreds have been forced to park their vehicles after a mix-up between regular gas and diesel fuel at a Calgary gas station.

Co-op spokesperson Karen Allan said on Dec. 26 that its fuel supplier mistakenly filled the regular gas storage tank at a south Calgary gas bar with diesel fuel.

It wasn't until some 500 vehicles had been fuelled that a customer brought the problem to the station's attention.

KATIE TURNER/METRO IN CALGARY

Fatal encounter

No pit-bull ban in Calgary, despite death of dog

Calgary has no plans to ban or otherwise restrict pit bulls after three of the dogs were involved in a fatal encounter in a city dog park.

A Pomeranian died in the incident on Monday, while another dog, a Great Pyrenees, was injured, after both off-leash animals approached a man walking three pit bulls on leash.

City officials seized the pit bulls, which are due to undergo behaviour tests.

ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO IN CALGARY

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Time to empty the piggy bank.
Penny collection starts Feb. 4

Jim Flaherty is setting his sights on your pennies. The federal finance minister is reminding Canadians that starting Feb. 4, the Royal Canadian Mint will stop distributing pennies and instead start collecting them from banks and other financial institutions.

Flaherty says he'll take every advantage over the next month to remind Canadians that the supply of pennies will start to diminish as a result.

In his March budget, Flaherty unexpectedly announced the demise of the one-cent piece, saying pennies cost too much to manufacture and are a nuisance to many Canadians.

After Feb. 4, cash transactions will have to be rounded to the nearest five-cent increment, but electronic transactions will still be calculated down to the individual cent.

A cabinet order last month gave Flaherty the authority to pay financial institutions for the mountains of pennies they'll begin to return to the mint. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Costly coinage

- The last pennies minted on May 4 in Winnipeg cost about 1.6 cents each to manufacture.
- Even though Finance Canada faces a one-time net cost of $38 million to retire the penny, the long-term savings to government and to the economy will be substantial.

Market Minute

DOLLAR 101.50¢ (+0.99¢)

TSX 12,540.77 (+107.24)

OIL $93.12 US (+$1.30)

GOLD $1,688.80 US (+$13)

Natural gas: $3.23 US (-12¢)
Dow Jones: 13,412.55 (+308.41)

Chump change: Are nickels next on chopping block?

Coins we don't love anymore. Some say five-cent piece is also becoming obsolete, and should follow penny into the sunset

The federal government is retiring the penny, and some think the nickel should be next in line. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

As the penny is set to begin retirement next month, there are already calls to put the nickel out to pasture as well.

The Royal Canadian Mint starts collecting one-cent coins on Feb. 4 for melting and recycling of the metal content, with some six billion pennies expected to be surrendered by Canadians over the next six years.

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announced the surprise demise in last year's budget, saying the penny had become a nuisance.

And a former Bank of Canada economist says the nickel is also becoming obsolete, and should be next in line for retirement.

"We see less and less people now ... digging in their wallets for nickels," Jean-Pierre Aubry said in an interview.

A retired 30-year veteran of the Bank of Canada, Aubry has been a leading proponent of withdrawing the one-cent piece from circulation.

In papers and presentations for Desjardins Group over the last few years, Aubry used economic models to show that the penny should actually have been killed in about 1982.

That was a tipping point, as more Canadians hoarded the coins and the Royal Canadian Mint was pressed to churn out billions more to keep retailers stocked, costing the government up to $11 million annually.

Aubry argues the nickel will soon hit the same tipping point the penny did in 1982, as Canadians hoard them in greater numbers, forcing the mint to distribute up to 350 million each year to meet retail demand. "It's a sign that the coin is not well used," he said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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With Zipcar purchase, Avis goes after younger customers

Avis is leaping into the car-sharing service business by buying Zipcar for $491.2 million US, aiming to capture a new type of customer and technology that will vastly expand its car rental options.

Car sharing has become a popular alternative to traditional rentals in metropolitan areas and on college campuses, allowing members to get a vehicle for an hour or two for short trips instead of renting a car for a day or using mass transit.

The segment has been growing while traditional car rentals have struggled in the current slow-growth economy.

Zipcar, which was founded in 2000, has more than 760,000 members, triple what it had in 2008. It went public in 2011 and 2012 is expected to be its first-ever profitable year. Avis Budget Group Inc. is the third-largest U.S. rental car company, behind Enterprise Rent-a-Car and Hertz Global Holdings Inc.

Zipcar chairman and CEO Scott Griffith poses in this April 2011 photo. Car-rental company Avis is buying Zipcar. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

"I've been somewhat dismissive of car sharing in the past but what I've come to realize is that car sharing, particularly on the scale that Zipcar has achieved and will achieve, is complementary to our traditional business," Avis' Chairman and CEO Ron Nelson said in a conference call after the deal was announced.

Nelson said the acquisition means Avis will now be able to reach younger, more tech-savvy consumers that prefer sharing services. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Smartphone market

In Southeast Asia, RIM's star still shines brightly

While BlackBerry-maker Research In Motion claws for a diminishing market share in North America, the smartphone maker maintains a reputation in Southeast Asia that in some places harkens back to its glory days.

At Siam Paragon, the biggest mall in Bangkok and one of the largest in Asia, the BlackBerry retail store is just steps away from outlets selling designer labels like Prada, Dolce & Gabbana and Lamborghini.

Indonesia is also a bright light, having become RIM's biggest market in Southeast Asia. The company holds roughly half of the local handset market and has been ranked the top-selling smartphone there for the past two years.

The BlackBerry also ranks as the No. 2 smartphone in the Philippines, and the No. 3 smartphone in Thailand and Malaysia.

But it is Indonesia, the world's fourth most populated country, that will likely play a key role in RIM's future as it struggles to launch its new BlackBerry smartphones in the fickle North American and European markets. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LEAVING HIS SINGLE-DUDE WAYS IN THE DUST

HE SAYS...
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca/voices/he-says

Year after year I make tough New Year's resolutions in an attempt to mend my bachelorhood ways, such as resolving to regularly dust the TV with a cloth, rather than running my hand over the screen every six months and exclaiming, "Wow, that's dusty!"

Well, I'm happy to say that in the past year I've finally made some progress. I no longer own a television.

In your face, dust. Cough, cough.

And in the kitchen, a friend of mine brought me 12 basic spices this year and, I must say, they really spruce up the windowsill.

Many of my other single-dude problems remain, however. I just don't have the right attitude.

Share and share alike

I consider a keyboard sticky with the previous user's Snickers bar a tasty value-add, similar to a mint on your pillow.

I notice this in newsrooms where different shifts share the same computers. Some of my co-workers start their shifts with spray and cloths and hand sanitizer, as if they'll be using their desks for open-heart surgery. Meanwhile, I consider a keyboard sticky with the previous user's Snickers bar a tasty value-add, similar to a mint on your pillow.

This failure as a human being is unfortunate from a life perspective but very fortunate from a column perspective because it leads to:

John's 2013 Bachelorhood Resolutions

- I resolve to clean the four breakfast bowls I have, rather than using increasingly less appropriate stand-ins such as Tupperware, popcorn bowls, flower pots and the mop bucket.
- I will clean these dishes before Corn Flakes have become irremovable fossils that will be of interest to top Corn Flake scientists seven centuries from now.
- I resolve to cook a meal that is not bacon, eggs and toast. (Making bacon and toast, eggs and toast, or bacon and eggs is partial credit only.)
- I resolve to accept that re-soaking the dishes repeatedly will not get them clean, that rotating the pillows only works once, and that not using the coffee machine for a while is not the same as cleaning the coffee machine.
- I resolve to invite people over so that I have to clean, but I'm still not scrubbing behind the toilet unless it's, at minimum, the Queen.
- I resolve to learn how to do things on my own rather than calling my parents with cryptic questions like, "Say there was a grease fire right now, would pouring baking soda on it help? Because I don't have any, hypothetically."
- I resolve to do these things soon enough that they can be considered New Year's resolutions and not some last-ditch bucket list. Because the bucket has corn flakes in it.

Royal resolve: Tackling a job even a prince like William can handle.
GETTY IMAGES FILE

From police box to mail box

ROYAL MAIL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Two worlds collide

Sci-fi classic gets stamp series

This image, released by Britain's Royal Mail on Wednesday, shows a postage stamp with an image of Doctor Who star Matt Smith. The Doctor — who usually uses a police box for travel — will be zooming through time and space on the edge of letters in 2013.

The stamps honouring the cult British television program will be available starting at the end of March. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Doctor Who celebrated

50

The Royal Mail is marking the 50th anniversary of the science fiction show Doctor Who with a series of stamps featuring each of the 11 actors who have played the title role. Those featured include the present doctor, Matt Smith, as well as past Time Lords such as David Tennant and Christopher Eccleston. The stamp featuring the first Doctor, William Hartnett, is shown below.

Time Lord's friends and foes go postal, too

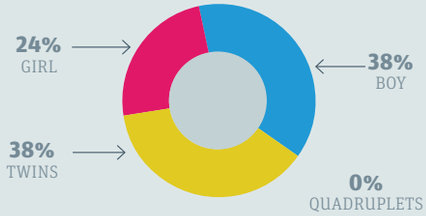
GETTY IMAGES FILE

The series will also include a miniature sheet that brings together Second Class stamps featuring four of the Doctor's friends and foes — a Dalek (shown above), an Ood, a Weeping Angel and a Cyberman. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

What's your royal baby prediction?



Twitter

@RamblesOfALady: I wonder if the #LTC made a New Years resolution to be on time? One can hope ~ #LdnOnt

@MGirash: I really appreciate that @londonlibrary has small group work/study spaces available for no cost. Community building! #LDNOnt

@CulinaryJulie: Looking for a good/quality place in #ldnont to sharpen my figure skates.

@rdekoter: #WesternU is once again open for business. Looking forward to a creative and productive 2013!

@jeffsage: -38 in the motherland this morn. Thx for the wonderful nature. Back to #LdnOnt for more Justice and Love.

metro

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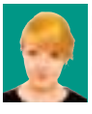
SCENE 2

Nope, one of last year's Rock Lottery bands, performs at APK Live after one day of writing and rehearsing. This year's event is being held at Call the Office. SARA FROESE

Audience is the winner at London's Rock Lottery

Fundraising event. Local musicians leave it to luck to determine their ensemble for performance at Call the Office on Saturday night



BACKSTAGE PASS
Amanda Grant
london@metronews.ca

Rock Lottery is back.

Twenty-five (mostly) local musicians have been picked to participate in the event, happening Saturday night at Call the Office.

The musicians will arrive early Saturday morning where their names will be drawn out of a hat to form five new bands. Each group will have a designated drummer, guitarist, bassist and vocalist as well as a "wild card" musician, someone capable of bringing a unique set of skills to the stage.

The newly formed bands are then given a rehearsal space and a day to compose five new songs, which they perform live that night.

"It's a little nerve-wracking in the morning when you're standing there and you know that everyone is anxious," said Justis Krar, a local musician who is a returning member of Rock Lottery. "But it's an excited nervous."

This year marks the third instalment of Rock Lottery, an annual fundraising event for the Forest City Gallery.

Sophie Quick, organizer of the event and board member of the Forest City Gallery, says Rock Lottery is able to build a bridge between the city's art and music scene.

"Every year, I see how many new connections are made between musicians in the city, how many people are introduced to the gallery and how it successfully merges the city's music and arts communities," Quick said.

This year's lineup is diverse and includes previous participants, like members of local bands Say Domino and Wild Domestic, as well as first-timers, like Baptized in Blood's Josh Torrance and Grey Kingdom's Spencer Burton.

Krar, who has participated as a guitarist in the past, will be taking a turn at the microphone as one of five musicians assigned to vocals.

"I'm planning on changing people's lives," said Krar, completely deadpan.

"So everyone should prepare to witness some pretty incredible things."

Regardless of whether you're a musician, an audience member, or an organizer, the best part of Rock Lottery is the suspense — who will be in what band? What genre of music will they write?

"It's cool because it's random," said Krar, "And you know any combination is going to be great."

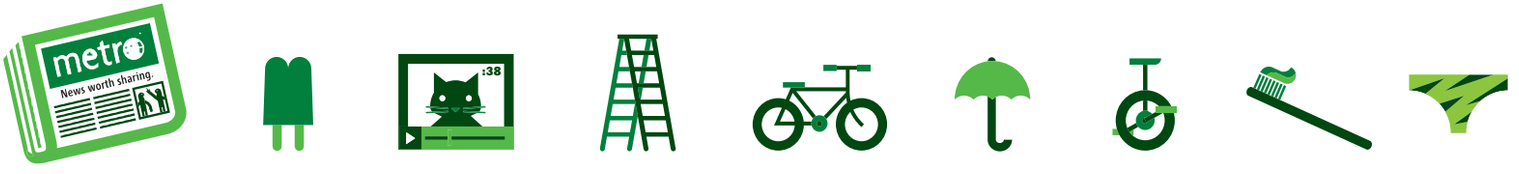
"When the venue is packed, anticipation is high and the newly formed bands wow us all, I get a little teary," said Quick.

Rock Lottery is at Call the Office Saturday night. Tickets are $7 at the door, which opens at 9 p.m.

Around town

- **Music.** Orlando Valencia's Pachanga Band performs Friday night at Brennan's Beer and Bistro. The Latin music night boasts free dance lessons starting at 10 p.m. Tickets are $5 at the door.
- **Art.** This is the final weekend for One for the Road, the Kim Adams exhibit at Museum London. Visit the museum from Friday through Sunday, noon until 5 p.m.

Sharability



Canadian country music. Dean Brody expects fun on first headlining tour

Dean Brody has been living the life since his success at the Canadian Country Music Association Awards. HANDOUT

It's a good thing Dean Brody has scheduled the dates for his first national headlining tour, because the country music star is all over the map — literally.

The British Columbia native, who now lives in Nova Scotia, records in Nashville and helps rescue girls from sexual exploitation in Brazil will perform in 24 Canadian cities in January and February. Brody will start kicking up his heels in Victoria and end with a tip of his cowboy hat in Halifax.

Brody, who was named male artist of the year and won album of the year for his record Dirt at the Canadian Country Music Association Awards in September, admits to being a little nervous.

"It's definitely going to be a challenge, but I'm looking forward to it," Brody said in an interview.

"I just want to give a good show. You know people that come out, they might not necessarily just want to hear just how the record sounds. We want to do some elements in the show that you wouldn't expect."

Brody said, for example, part of the show will be done acoustically.

"It's really cool. We had a rehearsal about a month ago preparing for the tour and we did this one segment where we're kind of around a campfire, we've got this big moon in the background and the sound of the crickets and stuff," he said.

"Boy, it was a lot of fun. It's going to be the most fun part of the show."

While it is officially the Dirt tour, Brody said fans will hear from all three of his albums. That includes the hit single Canadian Girls. Brody has his own favourites too.

"I love playing Wildflower," Brody said, referring to the single from his second record Trail in Life.

"I'm not sure why, but it always comes at a part in the show where you know we've rocked it out for three or four songs and then we pull it back and do Wildflower. To me, it's a point in the show to take a breath and just really fall into that song and I love it."

It wasn't clear if Brody would ever get to this point.

He moved to Nashville to be a songwriter and was encouraged to start recording his songs. But things didn't work out with his U.S. record label. Brody asked to be let out of his contract in 2009 because he said he was asked to make a compromise he wasn't willing to make. He moved his family back to Canada.

"I'm just glad it worked out because sometimes you do things out of principle and they don't always work out for the best financially. As far as your character goes, it's good to stand up to things you don't believe in," he said.

"But I really thought, 'Man, this is it. I'm going to be working in a coal mine. This isn't going to work out.'

"But I got lucky. Open Road Records took me on in Canada and ... we have a mutual respect for each other. It's great to be respected by your record label and have the freedom, the creative freedom, to be able to do what I do."

As a solo songwriter, Brody knows the pressure is on.

"You kind of put yourself out there. Like you write something and because you didn't write with anybody else, it's almost like being naked in front of a crowd," he laughed.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Learning to headline

"It's definitely going to be a challenge, but I'm looking forward to it."

Dean Brody
Talking about being the headliner on tour for the first time

Walking the line of super and natural

Sci-Fi television. Kris Holden-Ried speaks to Metro about working on Showcase's Lost Girl and the physical challenges it presents as an actor

STEPHEN ERAMO
scene@metronews.ca

Having a "wolf in the fold" is usually considered a bad thing, but if that wolf happens to be Lost Girl's Dyson, then you are in luck. Handsome, intelligent and brimming with animal magnetism — no pun intended — he is a member of the supernatural Fae community and works as a police homicide detective to help keep the peace amongst humans as well as the Fae.

For actor Kris Holden-Ried, who plays Dyson on the popular Showcase TV series, teetering between both worlds is a constant but welcome acting exercise.

"The physical challenges with Dyson are, one, he's a shape-shifter, so he has to have animalism, and two, he's of indiscriminate age, so we're playing him as 1,000 or so years old," notes Holden-Ried during a break on Lost Girl's Toronto set. "The trick is to then mix and match that with creating a grounded and believable character."

Dyson's unofficial crime-busting ally (and romantic interest) is Lost Girl's heroine and fellow Fae, Bo (Anna Silk), a beautiful Succubus able to suck the life out of you.

"In season one, Bo and Dyson shared a great deal of passion, but he also knew some of Bo's secrets," says Holden-Ried.

"While that put him at an advantage, it also stopped him from fully committing to her. Dyson ultimately fell in love with Bo, but couldn't show it, which was fun to play.

"At the end of season one, Dyson's love for Bo was ripped from his soul. That turned into a whole other journey for him in season two, where the constant emptiness he felt almost drove him crazy."

Kris Holden-Ried stars in Lost Girl on Showcase. HANDOUT

Far from Lost

Lost Girl premieres Jan. 6 on Showcase

- **Upcoming.** While the actor cannot reveal what awaits Lost Girl fans in the show's upcoming third season, it is obvious just by watching Holden-Ried at work that his enthusiasm for the series and playing Dyson has not waned in the least.

Downton Abbey. Could it all be boiling over in season three?

STEPHEN ERAMO
scene@metronews.ca

Lesley Nicol plays Mrs. Beryl Patmore. CARNIVAL FILM & TELEVISION LIMITED 2012 FOR MASTERPIECE

In 2010, a British-American period TV drama called Downton Abbey took the world by storm. Three seasons later, fans still eagerly tune in to watch the latest goings-on in the lives of the aristocratic Crawley family and their servants, all of whom live together in the fictional Yorkshire country estate of Downton Abbey.

Keeping everyone well-fed is Downton's cook, Mrs. Beryl Patmore, played by the lovely and talented Lesley Nicol. Although it was two years ago, she will not soon be giving anything away about Downton as Mrs. Patmore.

"Although I can't speak in detail, I can say that in season three, you'll see much more of Mrs. Patmore and Mrs. Hughes (Phyllis Logan) banding together rather than opposed to each other, which was also wonderful to investigate." DOWNTON ABBEY SEASON THREE PREMIERES JAN. 6 ON MASTERPIECE ON PBS. ALL THREE SEASONS ARE NOW AIRING ON VISIONTV.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

A year in music: Top 5 chart toppers of 2012

Music. From Gangnam Style to Call Me Maybe, Metro looks back at some of the year's biggest hits

Father John Misty made 2012's Top 5 with Fear Fun. CONTRIBUTED/MAXIMILLA LUKACS

Top 5 albums/singles

1. Frank Ocean's Channel Orange
2. TIE: Father John Misty's Fear Fun and PSY's Gangnam Style
3. Carly Rae Jepsen's Call Me Maybe
4. Gotye's Somebody That I Used to Know
5. TIE: Rihanna's Diamonds and Ke$ha's Warrior

How did we all leave We Are Young by Fun. off this list? Is it because we're all too old to sing that song out loud? Or is it that the opening of the song is just too schlocky to make it all worth the amazing chorus? Seriously, if that song was the chorus alone, it would be the song of the year. To tell you the truth, it probably still will be anyway. Also, here's where I'm a little bit of a jerk: That Gotye song officially started getting airplay last year. **PAT HEALY**

Somebody That I Used to Know stays on the list because it made me think there was this really great Police song from the '80s recently discovered and newly released. I think I just proved your old fogies theory. **AMBER RAY**

Maybe this supports the argument that I'm already an old fogey, but I had to look up the Rihanna and Ke$ha songs because I hadn't heard them before. Ke$ha has finally been the first to inspire me to call something "devil music" in an unflattering way. **HEIDI PATALANO**

Another bit of food for thought: Would Gangnam Style make the list if there weren't a video? People probably posed the same question about Duran Duran in 1982, and it's strange how this bit of devil's advocacy is still relevant in 2012. But seriously, in an age where music videos aren't shown on regular TV anymore, it is interesting that a video made such a huge cultural and musical splash. **PAT HEALY**

I think it would have — hell, I still haven't even seen the Gangnam Style video, but I somehow know the dance. I personally enjoyed Britney trying her hand (at) it while appearing on Ellen, but why was she dressed like a flight attendant for that episode? **MEREDITH ENG**

I think a prerequisite for best song of the year means we can sing along with it. Oh man, I'm such a xenophobe. **DOROTHY ROBINSON**

What about Kanye this year? Did anybody vote for Cruel Summer? **PAT HEALY**

I say this every single year, and I hate change so I'll say it again: I have never heard anything by Kanye West that I didn't want to turn off immediately. Who's old and grumpy? This girl — this girl right here. **MONICA WEYMOUTH**

Oh man, Monica, give Mercy a chance! There's so much going on in this track. I love how it flawlessly switches between winding dancehall to some gritty southern rap all while maintaining a cool, dark undertone and then suddenly taking a left turn to an electronic dance party. Yup, you have to bring ALL your moves to the floor. Adding to the awesomeness is the all-black ninja-Bedouin looks everyone sports in the stylized video. It's totally one of those fashion moments I can see being referenced years from now. **TINA CHADHA**

Carly Rae Jepsen. GETTY IMAGES

Editor's picks

Music editor Pat Healy's Top 5

1. Father John Misty's Fear Fun
2. Michael Kiwanuka's Home Again
3. Big Boi's Vicious Lies and Dangerous Rumors
4. Frank Ocean's Channel Orange
5. TIE: Bruce Springsteen's Wrecking Ball and The Walkmen's Heaven

This was a weird year for music. For the first time, I feel like there was actually too much to listen to. Look at the top lists of any major publication and there are very few similarities.

I, for one, am surprised more outlets aren't praising the stellar songcraft of Father John Misty and Michael Kiwanuka. Neither are reinventing the wheel. In fact, both seem very much rooted in sounds of the '60s and '70s.

But as for my next two entries, Big Boi and Frank Ocean, I think both are really doing great things to push their genres forward.

Big Boi took a brave tact on this most recent album, which also didn't make many lists (presumably due to its December release date). Instead of just a few indie collaborations here and there, like he has done in the past, almost every track is a collaboration with either Phantogram or Little Dragon. The results are completely original.

Frank Ocean's results are completely original too. It really is like he is on the forefront of bringing a much-needed update to R&B. The new school, which includes Miguel and The Weeknd, never knew a world where hip-hop didn't exist and that has formed their worldview in such a unique way that the old soulsters didn't have.

And in fifth place, maybe it's just loyalty, but two of my favourite acts released albums that weren't my favourites they've ever released, but I still enjoy them.

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

2012's memorable moments à la mode

Beauty and the buzz. From a dress double-up to a cropped-coiffe craze, here are some of the most talked-about style stories of 2012

The Olympics saw some of the most famous faces in fashion strutting to a David Bowie soundtrack. GETTY IMAGES

Michelle Obama and Ann Romney's matching hues.
The wives of the presidential candidates turned out to the second debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney in practically the same shade of hot pink. But they weren't by the same designer: Romney's was by Oscar de la Renta, and Obama's by Michael Kors. A potential matching prom dress-style embarrassment was chalked up to timing: October's breast cancer awareness month.

Marc Jacobs' Louis Vuitton show
Many of the designer runways seemed more of the same —stark stages, thumping music and audiences distracted by their electronic gadgets — but the Louis Vuitton fall catwalk in Paris commanded attention. Models dressed in their very best travelling clothes stepped off a reconstructed retro steam train. Valets carried the vintage-inspired hat boxes and vanity cases. The trip seemed refreshingly refined and modern.

Two-tone Stella McCartney dresses
McCartney, no stranger to the red carpet, has created a style that celebrities can't get enough of. Her ultra-flattering "silhouette" dress has become almost ubiquitous. It features one colour on the bodice and back, and a graphic opposite on the sides and sleeves. Kate Winslet has worn several versions, and Brooklyn Decker, Kate Moss, Edie Falco and Liv Tyler have, too. The best turn might have been Jane Fonda at the Cannes Film Festival.

Beyoncé's back-from-baby body
Some new mothers claim they feel sexier than ever. Beyoncé was living proof at the Met Gala, the important industry event co-hosted by Vogue's Anna Wintour. Beyoncé's skin-tight, largely sheer — save the bodice beading and feathered fish-tail train — gown by Givenchy announced that Ivy Blue Carter's mom wasn't going to hold back. An honourable mention goes to Jessica Simpson, who dieted her way to a Weight Watchers ad, then wound up pregnant again.

Supermodel reunion at the London Olympics.
Gold was the new black at the closing ceremony with a parade of supermodels wearing gilded gowns in a tribute to British fashion. Kate Moss and Naomi Campbell both had on Alexander McQueen, Georgia May Jagger's was by Victoria Beckham, Karen Elson was in Burberry, and Stella Tennant donned a Christopher Kane Swarovski-crystal catsuit.

Miley Cyrus' cropped cut
When Cyrus cut off the long hair her fans had become used to, she took some heat. She has said (and tweeted) repeatedly, though, that she was pleased with the new punk-pixie look and was sticking with it. Short hair turned out to be a big trend, with Alicia Keys, Rihanna and Anne Hathaway all ending the year with much shorter locks than they started with. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Front-page fashion

Moore at the Emmys

Julianne Moore's neon-yellow Dior Haute Couture outfit (really a sweater and ball skirt) spawned a love-it-or-hate-it debate among armchair style critics. What was largely left out of that conversation, however, was that it was Raf Simons' big celebrity debate for Dior.

007's slim suits

Daniel Craig's wardrobe in Skyfall is impeccably tailored — and quite tight. Unlike the James Bonds that came before him, Craig, whose wardrobe is created mostly by Tom Ford, takes his suits Euro-style with tapered legs and shorter rises.

Angelina Jolie at the Oscars

The leg that peeked out of the high thigh-high slit of her Versace gown was the most exciting appearance on the red carpet. It was Jolie's picture-perfect pose to expose just enough thigh that launched a thousand memes.

The Kit

Canadian street style

Spotted in: Ottawa

Fiona

Student and sales associate at AMH Style

Age: 19

What she's wearing
Tory Birch boots, Hudson jeans, Banana Republic button-up, Banana Republic jacket, Ferragamo bag.

Her inspiration
"I would definitely have to go with Leighton Meester, I think her style is both classic and elegant."

THE KIT PHOTOBLOGGER: KATARINA KURUC, WWW.LOVEK.ORG

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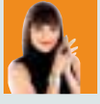


JEANNE SPACE
Jeanne Beker
life@metronews.ca

IN THIS HECTIC MODERN WORLD, TWITTER HAS BECOME A COOL AND SUCCINCT WAY OF COMMUNICATING. IT ALLOWS ME TO BE ACCESSIBLE, INSTANTLY SPEAK MY MIND AND CONNECTS ME WITH ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE.

@Jeanne_Beker: What resolution have you made for 2013 that you'd feel least guilty about not keeping?

@itsRyanHilton: spending 30$ a day at Starbucks

@Jeanne_Beker: Yikes! Sounds expensive!

@tamdelidelam: Quit smoking

@Jeanne_Beker: Oh please--do try to keep that resolution! Our health is our greatest treasure.

@Miss_VMorton: to never repeat an outfit, because, well, you can't not sometimes!

@Jeanne_Beker: Very ambitious! I say: Wear the same outfits...with different attitudes!

Resolutions from a decorator

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Every new year the decorating magazines, newspaper columns and home decor television shows ramble off the predicted trends for the upcoming new year.

Although it's good to know what they are, it's also important to consider which ones can — and cannot — be implemented in our lives.

My resolution this year is not to bring a lot of new trends into my life, but to say goodbye to a few that don't hold longevity in my home.

Here are two of last year's trends that I fell prey to in 2011-2012 — ones that have had their way (and their day) with me.

The colour brown has been used to create some pretty spectacular rooms, but it's time to say goodbye this year. SUPPLIED

The colour brown

We've seen brown tones dominate home decor for the past 10 years, and although it wasn't a new trend last year, it just seemed to linger on much longer than other colour trends from the past.

From espresso wood tones to deep brown leather furnishings, it's a promise to myself to think twice before introducing any more of it to my room's decor scheme. There are certain decor items that will always need to be brown — wood flooring, cabinetry and book cases, but using it in upholstery, paint and wallpaper feels a bit overdone these days.

Replace those dark brown colours with rich, muted shades of grey, purple, teal and cinnamon.

The deconstructed factory look

Stripped metal furnishings, repurposed wood, worn carpets and industrial factory cart coffee tables have somewhat had their day.

There's always a casual decor scheme on tap and the industrial chic look is now overblown. Was it an attempt to decorate in a more casual manner without going back to country decorating? My new motto about this look: If it looked great in a factory setting, then don't bring it home anymore.

Search for fresher looks in the casual decor schemes — pastel colours, pale wicker, seagrass and off-white paint colours.

Industrial Chic: Used initially for a little shock value, industrial items have now become overblown in the home. SUPPLIED

New year, new colour: Emerald named Pantone's colour of 2013

Emerald green.
Keep in style this year when planning your home decor

Emerald is the jewel in Pantone's crown of colours for 2013. The vibrant green hue was announced as its colour of the year.

Emerald is symbolic of growth, renewal and regeneration, said Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, the research division of Pantone Inc., which creates colour standards for the fashion, beauty and home industries.

"That is what the stone implies and has ... for many cultures. It celebrates new life, and that, we feel, is a good message because it speaks of optimism for the future," she said in a phone interview from Bainbridge Island, Wash.

"At the same time, because it is closely connected to the gemstone, more people would think of it as a colour that is very sophisticated."

The selection of the rich green hue — which Eiseman describes as a "well-balanced colour" — is a striking departure from Tangerine Tango, the reddish-orange shade that took Pantone's top colour honour for 2012.

Pantone's annual colour forecast of the hottest hue for the year ahead factors in a number of different influences, from graphic design and fashion to film and TV.

Eiseman said they also look at the consumer zeitgeist from an international perspective, and start to seek out a colour symbolic of what people feel they need.

They are also on the lookout for a "building up of references" in the years leading up to the hue in question being named the top colour, she added.

With that checklist in tow, emerald — and its seemingly universal appeal among style arbiters and consumers — appears to fit the bill.

"We had to look for a specific green that was not one that we were seeing as much of, but as I said, was on the ascendancy," said Eiseman.

Indeed, the vibrant shade has been a fashionable favourite for some time, from the sleeved, sequined Versace number worn by Angelina Jolie at the 2011 Golden Globes to the sleek, silk Mulberry dress donned recently by the Duchess of Cambridge.

But Eiseman noted that emerald greens are surfacing in cosmetics as well, notably in the proliferation of colours emerging in nail polishes.

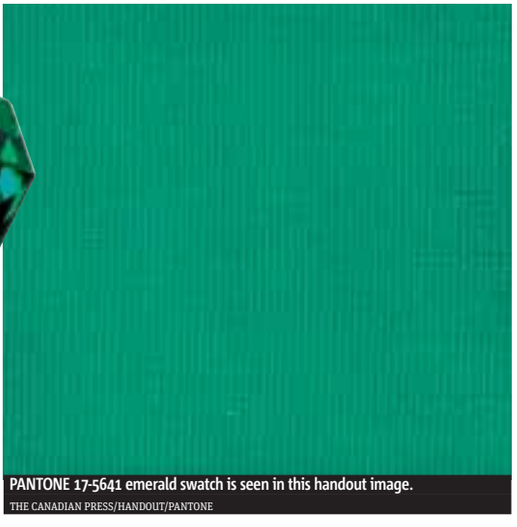
Eiseman said emerald is already being seen colouring kitchen appliances, and consumers can expect to see bedding and dishware among the array of items steeped in the shade in the months to come.

"Certainly in domestics and linens, table tops, glassware, ceramics (is) where emerald really shines," she said. "If you do emerald in glassware, it is just spectacular. It also takes on such beautiful colourations.

"These are the ways you're going to be seeing it, and in a lot of high-tech kind of applications as well going forward," she added.

"The more time and effort that is put into technology and what creates some of these finishes, like in cars, you are definitely going to be seeing (this colour) coming up."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



PANTONE 17-5641 emerald swatch is seen in this handout image. THE CANADIAN PRESS/HANDOUT/PANTONE

Colour me emerald

"If you look into emerald ... from a very traditional, historical perspective — and this is something that's shared by many cultures — it comes from the most abundant colour family in nature. There are more greens than there are any other colours."

Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute

Lots of green beans and black beans and chickpeas — oh my!

ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit
rosereisman.com

This salad has nutrition galore and makes a great side salad or buffet dish. Often I'll add some grilled chicken or fish and make it a main meal. Cut the avocado just before serving, or add some lemon juice to it to prevent discolouration.

1. Steam the green beans just until bright green and still crisp, about 3 minutes. Place immediately under cold water and rinse until the beans are no longer warm. Place in a serving bowl.

2. Spray small non-stick skillet with cooking oil and place over medium heat. Sauté corn, stirring frequently, until browned, approximately 8 minutes. Add to the serving bowl, along with the black beans, chickpeas, bell pepper, onion and avocado.

3. Whisk the zest, juice, oil, garlic, ginger, jalapeño, salt and pepper together in a small bowl.

4. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss to mix well. Garnish with the cilantro. **ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN**

Ingredients

- 8 oz green beans
- 1 cup drained canned corn kernels
- 1 cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 3/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup diced red onion
- 1/2 cup diced ripe avocado

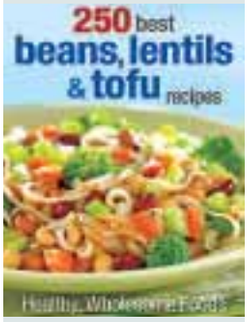
Dressing

- 1 1/2 tsp lime or lemon zest
- 3 tbsp freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp minced fresh garlic
- 1 tsp minced fresh ginger
- 1 tsp minced jalapeño
- Pinch salt and black pepper
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro, basil or parsley

Three-Bean Avocado and Charred Corn Salad with Lime Dressing

This recipe serves six. LORELLA ZANETTI, FROM ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS)

Cookbook of the Week



Spotlight on beans

Knowing that beans, lentils and tofu are good for you is one thing, but cooking with them is another. 250 Best Beans, Lentils & Tofu Recipes, compiled by author and editor Judith Finlayson, offers varied and globally-influenced recipes.

Winter-friendly eats such as Curry-Fried Tofu Soup With Vegetables and Udon Noodles and Firehouse Chili Soup will warm you up. And even meat eaters can enjoy the book with hearty dishes like Quince-Laced Lamb Shanks With Yellow Split Peas and Baked Shrimp Enchiladas. **METRO**

Lighten it up with Poached Eggs Over Ricotta and greens

The beauty of poached eggs is their versatility. Depending on what you pair them with, they can be breakfast, lunch or even dinner.

So for this quick and easy weekday meal, serve them with a bed of arugula, a scoop of ricotta cheese — one of the most overlooked cheeses in the dairy case (it's good for more than just lasagna and stuffed shells!) — and a bit of buttered multigrain toast. It's simple. It's filling. And it could be breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Want it to be a bit more robust? Just about any cooked and cooled vegetables could be added to the arugula. Leftover roasted winter vegetables, such as butternut squash or carrots, would be great.

1. Divide the arugula between 4 serving bowls.

2. In a medium bowl, mix together the ricotta and lemon zest. Season with salt and black pepper. Divide between the serving bowls, spooning it over the arugula. Set aside. Bring a large saucepan of water to a low simmer. Add the vinegar.

3. Crack each egg into a small heatproof glass. One at a time, gently and slowly pour each egg into the simmering water, bringing the lip of the glass right down to the water so that the egg slides in. Depending on the size of your pan, you may need to cook them in 2 batches.

4. Cook for 4 minutes, then use a slotted spoon to lift each egg out (letting excess water drip away). Nestle one egg into the ricotta in each serving bowl.

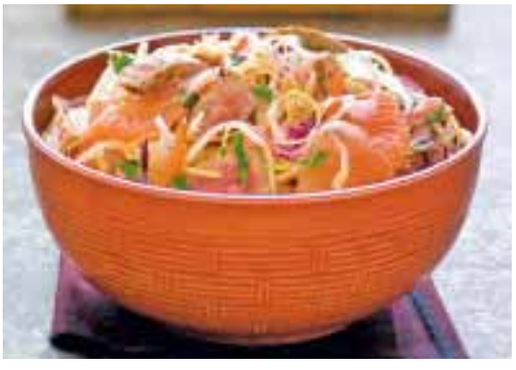
5. Season the eggs with salt and pepper, then drizzle with truffle oil and sprinkle with chives. Serve with the toast. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

This recipe serves four. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

- 4 cups arugula
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 tbsp white or cider vinegar
- 4 large eggs
- Truffle oil
- Minced fresh chives
- 4 thick slices multigrain bread, toasted and buttered

Vitamin C fix. Grilled Beef with Grapefruit Slaw



1. Cut skin off grapefruit, cut into segments, place in a bowl. Squeeze grapefruit membrane juices into a bowl. Stir in parsley, garlic, ginger, cumin and black pepper. Divide mixture in half.

2. Trim fat from steak. Add the steak to one half of the grapefruit juice mixture. Coat, cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes to 4 hours.

3. Place steak in greased grill pan over medium high heat and grill turning once, for about 5 minutes or until desired doneness.

4. Stir brown sugar into reserved marinade. Return pan to medium high heat. Add coleslaw and marinade mixtures. Cook, stirring for 2 minutes. Add grapefruit segments and cook for 1 minute.

5. Slice steak. Add to coleslaw mixture. **NEWS CANADA**

Ingredients

- 2 Florida grapefruits
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) finely chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1 clove garlic, grated
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) grated ginger
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) ground cumin
- Pinch freshly ground black pepper
- 1 grilling strip loin beef steak
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) packed brown sugar
- 750 ml (3 cups) coleslaw salad mix

‘The Nuge’ dispensing nuggets of NHL wisdom

World juniors. Nugent-Hopkins a source of insight for Team Canada teammates with big-league aspirations

Team Canada captain Ryan Nugent-Hopkins looks up ice during practice on Wednesday in Ufa, Russia. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Regardless of what happens the rest of the way for Team Canada at the world junior hockey championship, most of the players on the team hope — one day — to make the NHL.

“It’s in the back of your mind all the time,” said forward Boone Jenner, a draft pick of the Columbus Blue Jackets. “It’s the main goal. Since you’re a little kid you want to play in the NHL. Every day you try to think about that and wonder how you’re going to get better each day and keep going. It’s the ultimate goal.

“And hopefully some day I’ll be able to set foot on the ice for a game.”

While his teammates can only dream of life in the NHL, captain Ryan Nugent-Hopkins has already lived it. He was a point-per-game player with the Edmonton Oilers last year, and a rising star in the league.

As such, Nugent-Hopkins has become a wonderful resource for his teammates to learn about life in the bigs.

“They definitely have a lot of questions,” said Nugent-Hopkins. “Some guys have experienced a few games. Some guys will be there in a few seasons. There definitely are some questions and I try to shed light on it.”

What does he tell them?

“It’s definitely the best of everything,” said Nugent-Hopkins. “The checking is so much better, the speed of the game is just amazing. The first thing I noticed was the atmosphere in the buildings. It was extremely fun to play in, playing against the best players in the world, players I’ve always watched, was pretty cool.”

As much as Nugent-Hopkins has been the focus of the team’s offence on the ice, he is the focus of attention off it for the advice he can give.

“He’s been talking to us a little bit about it,” said Jenner. “Little stories. Everyone listens in ... He’s already been up there. It’s kind of cool.”

London Knights defenceman Scott Harrington — drafted by the Penguins — pays rapt attention when Nugent-Hopkins talks.

“He’s been great for us,” said Harrington. “He brings so much experience and leadership. He told us what it’s like. It sounds awesome. It’s motivation for the rest of us to get to where he is.”

In all, 20 of Team Canada’s 23 players are already drafted by NHL clubs. As many as 10 could get the call to come to camp immediately after the tournament if the lockout ends.

They’ll have pulled off a rare double: Getting to play in the world juniors, then getting an immediate shot at the NHL .

“It’s definitely pretty exciting to think about it that way,” said Kitchener Rangers defenceman Ryan Murphy, a lock to go to the Carolina Hurricanes’ camp. “I never really thought about it, but that could have been my last game in Kitchener I played before the break.

“It would be nice to play another game in Kitchener, but it would be pretty cool to play in the NHL. Whatever happens, I’ll be happy with it.”

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Go to metronews.ca for coverage of Thursday’s Canada-U.S. semifinal in Ufa, Russia.

Quarter-final clashes

John Gaudreau had a hat trick, Riley Barber scored twice and the United States beat the Czech Republic 7-0 to set up a rematch with Canada in Thursday’s semifinal. Canada topped the U.S. 2-1 in the preliminary round.

- Defending champion Sweden will face Russia in the other semifinal.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

Rays, Price come to 1-year agreement

The Tampa Bay Rays and American League Cy Young Award winner David Price have agreed to a one-year deal for just over $10 million and avoided arbitration.

Price, who earned $4.35 million in 2012, agreed to the $10.1125 million deal Tuesday. The Rays announced it on Wednesday.

He became the franchise’s first 20-game winner in 2012, going 20-5 with an AL-best 2.56 ERA and 205 strikeouts in 211 innings. Price narrowly beat out Detroit’s Justin Verlander for the honour that annually goes to the league’s top pitcher.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

David Price GETTY IMAGES FILE

NBA

Clippers owner’s son found dead in Malibu

The son of Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling was found dead of an apparent drug overdose at his Malibu, Calif., home, authorities said Wednesday.

The body of Scott Ashley Sterling, 32, was found shortly after 11:30 p.m. Tuesday, Los Angeles County coroner’s Lt. Larry Dietz said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHLers temper excitement for return to ice

Former Canadiens players Mathieu Darche, left, and Steve Begin arrive for a September training session in Brossard, Que. Begin is cautiously optimistic a deal to end the lockout is coming soon. GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

The talks have heated up and a deal could soon be at hand, but NHL players are trying not to let their hopes get too high that a collective bargaining agreement will get signed and a partial season will be saved.

A group of eight NHL players skating in Candiac, Que., a suburb of Montreal, Wednesday were glad that their players’ union and the league have been talking over the last few days in New York. But they caution that the NHLPA thought a deal was close only a month ago, only to see commissioner Gary Bettman withdraw his offer.

“Yes, we’re excited, but I hope it’s not like last time when we were all excited and then the next thing you know, it’s off the table,” said forward Steve Begin. “But you have to stay positive.”

Begin does not have a contract, but is awaiting the chance to crack the Calgary Flames’ roster during what may be a short training camp.

Quoted

“Now I think it’s time ... I think they’ll get something done.”

Locked-out defenceman Steve Begin

The league wants a deal done by Jan. 11 so a 48-game schedule can start on Jan. 19. The threat of losing an entire season, as happened in 2004-05, looks to have lit a fire under the negotiations.

“I’ve got excited before and I’m not going to get excited until a deal is signed,” cautioned Montreal Canadiens captain Brian Gionta.

“We’re looking forward because it’s getting late,” said Canucks forward Alex Burrows. “We’re in the new year now, so we have to make sure they keep talking and find a way to grind it out and agree on a few things.” THE CANADIAN PRESS

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Today's Mercury-Uranus link warns that what you desire the most is unlikely to be good for you, so maybe you need to think about it again. Try to think through what the consequences might be — it could save you a lot of bother later on.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Focus on the big issues today. Don't let little everyday things distract you. Most people seem to enjoy getting caught up in trivial details. But you're not most people, you're a Taurus. Be different.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Whatever else you do over the next 24 hours, you must stay in control of your emotions. If you allow them to get out of hand, you could end up in a place you really don't want to be. Stay calm.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You won't be able to hide your thoughts and feelings today. Your face will betray you even when you think you are lying convincingly. You might as well open up and let the world know what's in your heart.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You may be inclined to work harder than ever but it really isn't necessary. Ask yourself, honestly, if there is anything that must be done immediately. Chances are most things can wait a few days.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Although you are feeling pretty dynamic at the moment, you may find it hard to get moving today. Don't let it worry you if nothing much gets done because you will more than make up for it later on.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Stop wasting time and energy thinking about what might have been and start thinking about what still could be if you get your act together right now. The past is over and done with, so focus on the future.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 2 04 - Nov. 22
If you don't follow the rules today, you could find yourself in a lot of trouble. Be wary of people who try to encourage you to take the kind of risks that even you tend to avoid. They'll lead you astray.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You may be a nice guy by nature but you will fight for what you believe and you are certainly no pushover. Who was it who said, "Speak softly and carry a big stick"? That's the kind of outlook you need.

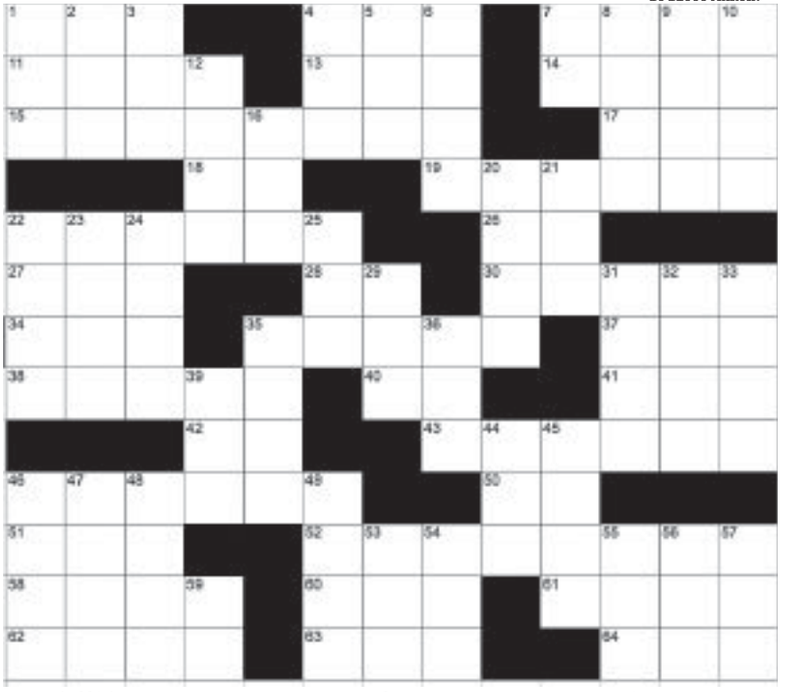
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may be inclined to throw yourself at each and every challenge that comes your way but that's just a waste of time and energy. Choose your battles carefully and aim to win them one at a time.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Rivals and competitors seem determined to give you a hard time but that's OK. You are at your best when it seems as if the world is against you. It's not true, of course, but it does tend to motivate you.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
It may seems as if your life is heading down a predestined course but that isn't strictly true. You can change your destiny any time you choose, but first you need to believe that it's possible. Start believing today. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword

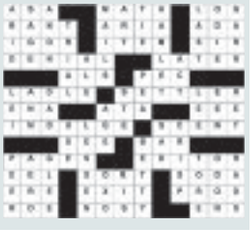
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. Coffee holder
4. Beer holder
7. Intense anger
11. Minerals
13. Opening (anat.)
14. I smell - — (2 words)
15. Window shopping
17. Patience – – virtue (2 words)
18. First two vowels in a sequence
19. Handbag handles
22. Pancake mixture
26. Battery sz.
27. Spanish cheer
28. Blood type (abbr.)
30. Fencing weapon
34. Actress Maris of Nurses
35. Show gratitude to
37. Ruin
38. Florida city
40. Negative
41. – – loss for words (2 words)
42. Chemical suffix
43. Confidential
46. Newcomer
50. Unser of racing
51. Lab eggs
52. Refrains from
58. Yesteryear
60. "The Crying Game" actor
61. Kind of point
62. Monthly exp.
63. Directed
64. Atlas abbr.

Down
1. Corn throwaway
2. YYZ posting
3. Prefix meaning recent
4. Japanese carp
5. Shore bird
6. Jokes
7. Egyptian Sun God
8. Diva's solo
9. Sound of fright
10. Greek letters
12. Smack
16. Lay eyes on
20. Chore
21. Not yet cooked
22. Gravy holder
23. Burghoff's co-star
24. Plow puller
25. School cheer
29. Exclude
31. Actor Epps of House, M.D.
32. Hotel posting
33. Mild oath
35. Powder
36. Numerals (abbr.)
39. Luau fare
44. Consume
45. Chowder ingredient
46. Slangy refusal
47. Football shape
48. Bud holder
49. My Name is —-
53. Opie's aunt
54. Melancholy
55. Comparative suffix
56. Word with 'waste' and 'want'
57. Fr. holy woman
58. Roger E. Mosley on Magnum, P.I.

Yesterday's Crossword



What's online

See today's answers metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's Sudoku

4	2	8	3	5	9	1	7	6
5	9	3	7	6	1	2	4	8
7	6	1	8	4	2	9	3	5
8	3	7	1	2	5	6	9	4
6	5	2	9	3	4	7	8	1
1	4	9	6	8	7	3	5	2
2	7	4	5	1	3	8	6	9
9	1	8	4	7	6	5	2	3
3	8	5	2	9	8	4	1	7

	2		8		7		1	
	7	5				9	4	
1								2
		6	7	1	8	2		
		4	6	9	3	8		
5								7
	8	9				3	6	
	6		4		5		8	

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